



NATIONAL FEDERATION OF FEDERAL EMPLOYEES

Affiliated with the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers



Local 919, Oceanside, California

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Contact: Thomas Brockson

Phone: (610) 457-8768

Marine Corps Mistake Costs Camp Pendleton Police Officers Thousands, and a Hefty Pay Cut to Boot

Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Oceanside, California – Recently, the civilian police officers who protect and watch over Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton received word from their superiors that a clerical error will cost the officers thousands of dollars out of pocket now, and their collective futures are dimmed with pay cuts of \$300 or more per month, effective immediately.

An administrative clerical error placed the Pendleton officers in a pay table based on higher San Diego City rates instead of the correct and lower pay table for San Diego County. The problem is, this error occurred back in 2008.

“This is devastating to our officers and their families,” stated Camp Pendleton Police Officer Thomas Brockson, who also serves as vice-president of the police union, the National Federation of Federal Employees. “Our officers are in no way responsible for this, yet they will get bills from the government for up to \$35,000. That’s pretty hard to pay back when you live paycheck to paycheck and your salary is also cut.”

The pay cuts and back-pay bills are causing widespread hardship within the ranks at Pendleton, a department that already suffers from recruitment and retention problems because the Department of Defense (DoD) pays less than the surrounding civilian law enforcement agencies. “We are losing good people all the time and this latest disappointment will certainly hurt our retention,” Brockson said. “But the worst of this will fall on individual officers and their families. This kind of sudden financial hardship stresses families, causes depression and changes lives for the worse even if they work a second job just to break even.” Like most of the officers, Brockson is a veteran.

Another officer deeply affected is Felipe De La Cruz. For De La Cruz, the pay cut and back-pay bill come at a particularity bad time for his wife and four children. Like many Americans, De La Cruz has very little savings. His wife is finishing her college degree, an investment in their future for which they incurred debt. “We both work very hard, putting in long hours to keep food on the table and pay the bills, and now this happens,” said De La Cruz. “We are in a full panic. We did nothing wrong but it feels like there is no way out.”

The police officers have called on Congressmen Darrell Issa and Duncan Hunter to demand a waiver from DoD to withdraw the back-pay bills and place the officers in the higher pay table permanently since the two pay jurisdictions are so close. They also appealed to Defense Secretary James Mattis to step in.

“We desperately need this waiver for both the pay rate and back-pay,” said Brockson, “The clock is ticking and these officers and their families need help before any more damage is done.”

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Established in 1917, the National Federation of Federal Employees is the oldest union representing civil service federal employees. NFFE represents 110,000 federal employees in 35 departments and agencies government-wide, including approximately 50,000 Defense workers.

NFFE is affiliated with the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers, AFL-CIO. For more information, go to

www.nffe.org.